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ABSTRACT

This book examines how individuals from low-income families in the United States are able to attend college. Part 1 focuses on the odds against a poor person attending college, looking at the reality of growing up poor in the United States and the odds against escaping such poverty. Part 2 examines how poor people beat such odds, presenting a study of 24 poor, first-generation college students that seeks to identify the factors that enabled these individuals to attend college. It describes the experiences of the most successful among the group, namely those attending highly selective universities, as well as less successful individuals, namely older adults attending community colleges. Part 3 focuses on how to improve the odds for poor people, concentrating on the positive role of mentors in the lives of the individuals in the study. The book concludes by discussing financial aid, early intervention, and transition programs that may help even the odds for poor people hoping to attend college. Two appendixes provide brief biographies of the students interviewed for the study and a demographic profile of the students. (Contains 84 references.) (MDM)

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